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panion of the trumpets by parent and offspring clans constituted a phratriac affiliation and served to perpetuate their former unity. 534 776

When the Munduruc̃ú shifted from a patrilocal to a matrilocal mode of residence during the nineteenth century, the clans lost their residential basis entirely and their male members were scattered by marriage throughout many villages. The sacred trumpets continued in their role as residences of the ancestral and companion spirits, but they no longer functioned to protect and aid a unified clan-village unit. Today, the trumpets are still regarded as the property of certain clans, but their spirits serve to protect a multiclan village. The close relationship that formerly existed between trumpets, clan ancestors, and clan members has become considerably attenuated, if not altogether lost. The trumpets are now considered the property of the clan of the man who manufactured them. In one village, no member of the clan that owned the village trumpets was in residence in the community. However, members of other clans played the trumpets and the village was nonetheless under the protection of the trumpet spirits. It is not surprising, then, that many informants considered the souls of the trumpets to be of greater importance to the village than were the spirits appropriate to the clan that owned them. The significance of the latter supernaturals will probably become increasingly dim in Munduruc̃ú thought in future years owing to their incompatibility with the new social structure. 778 174 614

The Soul

The Munduruc̃ú believe that all humans, animals, fish, and domesticated plants possess a soul, or *ibiunbök;* the most detailed and most important body of belief, however, concerns the souls of humans. People have two *ibiunbök;* one is the real soul, and the other is merely the shadow or reflection of the individual. The latter is believed to become transformed into the *aök* spirit upon the physical death of its bearer, and the former leaves the body and goes to the afterworld. The real *ibiunbök* is thought to resemble a small, black, ovoid-shaped pebble and is said to be situated in the region of the spinal column, between the lower extremities of the shoulder blades. Although it has physical reality, no one knows of what material it is made. 824 825 774

In spite of their belief in the immortality of the soul, the Munduruc̃ú are not as worried about the fate of the soul after death as they are with the misadventures that may befall the soul during life. The soul is said to leave the body sometime after death, but no informant was certain whether the soul departed immediately or lingered in the corpse for a period of time. The soul of the deceased has three possible destinations. Those of men who devoted considerable time to the playing of the sacred trumpets, or *karökö*, go to Karökötkai, the place where the trumpets were first discovered by the women. There they play the instruments and live well, for the forests teem with game and the rivers with fish. Men and women who knew the ceremonial dances for the spirit mothers of the game reside in another afterworld, known as Upïtcharö, or the land of the game. The animals there have human forms, although the forests are paradoxically thought to be 775

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totally different structures, and the Mundurucú have changed the form and meaning of religious elements in such a way that they function within the structure of Mundurucú culture. 775 775

Although the Christian concept of the soul has main reference to the hereafter, the Mundurucú beliefs in the soul are more closely concerned with the here and now. The souls of people afflicted with a certain illness can wander abroad and constitute a threat to society. Also, the soul is highly vulnerable to theft by the game animals. And finally, the soul can be used as a means of obtaining omens and knowledge. 774 787

The souls of the dead remain permanently in the afterworld and are not thought to intervene thereafter in the affairs of the living except in one highly limited way. They are not believed to return to the world as ghosts nor are they regarded as a source of danger. But the soul of a living person may turn into an *uxutsakuakat*, or wandering soul, during the course of a malady characterized by weakness, fever, and yellow skin. The person so afflicted is generally unaware of the journeys of his soul, but some are said to become *uxutsakuakat* willingly and to remember the deeds of their wandering souls. The soul always travels at night and at these times attacks sleeping people. On occasion, it travels with other wandering souls and, thus strengthened and emboldened, may strike at persons who are awake and walking about. 775 774

The wandering soul is believed to be especially dangerous, for defense against it consists of purely temporary measures and there is no cure for sick people whose souls wander. The *uxutsakuakat* can be driven away by the shaman, who spears it with a five-inch-long lance, but it always returns to the attack. It attacks children and robs their souls, and visits adults as a vampire that sucks the blood from its victims. Only the shaman can see wandering souls, although anybody can hear their footsteps at night. However, the soul travels about on a cord that stretches like a piece of rubber, and its footprints are never visible the next day.

After the sick person dies, the soul goes to an afterworld, and its nocturnal travels cease. People so afflicted are not killed, in spite of the danger to the community. The soul of a young woman of the village of Cabruá was known to wander at night, but no action was taken against her. The residents of the village were extremely nervous during the nights of her illness, and most hesitated even to speak of it. 775

The vampire aspect of the wandering soul is reminiscent of European folklore, and there exists here also the possibility that the Mundurucú borrowed the belief from their Brazilian neighbors. One Brazilian informant specifically stated that the people of the Tapajós River believed that the souls of some sick people journey at night as vampires, although they do not travel on magical elastic cords. Borrowing in this instance appears obvious, although it is not certain just who borrowed from whom. It is possible in all these examples that the transmission of the themes is extremely complex. The Mundurucú may well have received this concept from the whites but through the intermediary of another Indian tribe 774 177

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774 177 rather than directly from their immediate Brazilian neighbors. In our present state of knowledge of the ethnology of the Amazon region, reliable reconstructions of such diffusion are most difficult.

774 755 784 In the preceding discussion of spirit mothers of game animals, it was mentioned that the *putcha ïi* avenges itself upon humans by stealing their souls. This is one of the gravest afflictions that may befall a Mundurucú, and only the performance of a ceremony is sufficient to regain the soul of a stricken person; ordinary shamanistic curing techniques are inadequate. Men can lose their souls to the game through a variety of offenses. The insults to the game already described are the most common means of occasioning the anger of the spirit mothers. One can also lose his soul if he sits too close to a fire over which the head of a game animal is roasting, and he is struck by the optic fluid from an exploding eye. Another means of losing one's soul is to have adulterous relations with the wife of a member of the *Biu ïi* (Mothers of the Tapir) society, which is responsible for impersonating the tapir during certain ceremonies. In these cases, the tapir robs the soul of the offending male. The members of the *Biu ïi* society, themselves, are in danger of losing their souls during those ceremonies in which they perform. They must [515] be especially careful not to bathe in the streams during rituals, as the *tawe ïi*, or mother of the prego monkey, will surely steal their souls. To prevent this they bathe in the house from gourds.

Women may also lose their souls through offenses against the game, but since women do not hunt, this rarely occurs. However, a woman who bathes during her first menses or shortly after the birth of a child may have her soul taken by the jararaca snake. Either the large or small species of this reptile family robs the soul, depending on whether the woman is on land or in the water at that time. The jararaca turns the soul over to the tapir, and it begins the long journey described below.

774 The journey of the stolen soul is believed by the Mundurucú to be a terrifying and danger-fraught experience. Although the *putcha ïi* is often spoken of as stealing the soul, the actual theft appears to be the work of the tapir and, less commonly, of other animals and spirit mothers of species. After the tapir steals the soul, it runs with it through thick underbrush and swims across rivers. The beast then gives the soul to the peccary, which travels for some time with it and then passes it on to a lesser game animal. The soul is finally transferred to the smallest species of monkey which, in turn, gives it to the largest variety of fish. It passes on to smaller fish until it finally reaches the smallest species. At this point the journey ends, and the afflicted person dies.

The person whose soul has been robbed lies in a semicoma and dreams of the trials to which his soul is exposed. The rigors of the trip are such that the person grows steadily weaker, and death may occur at almost any time during the travels of the stolen soul. If the animal with which it is traveling dies, the sick person dies also. Two parts of the journey are especially dangerous. At one point the soul passes within a stone's throw of the house of a prego monkey, which throws semen at it. If the soul is struck by only a drop of the semen, its owner dies. In another

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part of its trip, the soul travels with the coatá monkey. This animal traverses one section of its passage by bending an assaí palm over, grabbing its branches, and then letting it fling him into the foliage of another tree as it springs back. If the soul is not careful, it falls to the ground, killing its sick owner. The only dangerous part of the journeys with various species of fish, except for the invariably fatal end of the trip, is with the black piranha, which tries to eat the soul.

The concept of soul loss, like the belief in spirit mothers of game animals with which it is associated, is widespread among both Indian and rural Brazilian inhabitants of the Amazon region. Especially interesting because of its similarity to the Mundurucú belief is Wagley's report that the Brazilian population of the community of Ita believes that the mãe de bicho punishes humans by stealing their "shadows."[25]

Although the departure of the soul from a living body is generally an occasion of great danger, there are some circumstances under which it is considered desirable and beneficial. The souls of shamans frequently travel abroad and are able to visit the underworlds of the *kokeriwat* and the afterworlds of the Mundurucú. Shamans visit the afterworld of the game, (where they serve as shamans to the animals), and that of the trumpets, but they do not visit the Land of the *Yuruparí*. The wounded warrior was believed to acquire temporary shamanistic powers during the period of his incapacity, and his soul wandered abroad while he lay in his hammock and dreamed of its experiences. These travels were considered desirable, and care was taken to remove the penis sheath of the warrior to allow him to dream. The Mundurucú were unable to explain why the penis sheath inhibited dreams and the wandering of the soul.

The souls of sleeping people sometimes travel harmlessly abroad, and dreams are believed to be the experiences of the soul while away from the body. Dreams are not considered visions or prognostications of future events, but they are thought to be good or bad omens. Thus, if a man dreams of some frightening experience, he will not leave the village for a few days for fear of some unknown danger.

Certain people are able to derive knowledge from their dreams. These people, known as *chaserctaibitchanyen* (those who know how to explain dreams), derive their power through medication administered to them as children. The souls of Mundurucú of times long past appear to them in dreams and teach them certain songs that are sung during ceremonies. Significantly, the songs taught to dreamers are not new or forgotten ones, but songs that are quite actively present in Mundurucú culture and known by other dreamers.

All animals have souls, which return to the afterworld of the game and become transformed into people upon the death of the animal. Fish are also thought to have souls, but they are accorded little importance in Mundurucú thought. Although individual fish and animals have souls, only species of domesticated plants have souls. Dogs, too, are thought to have souls, but the canine soul returns to the Land of the Dogs upon the death of its body. Also, dogs are not considered to be

[25] Wagley, 1953, p. 225.

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774 825 under the protection of a spirit mother nor do they possess the *chewoi*, or malignant power of the game. Finally, all other human beings are considered endowed with souls much like those of the Mundurucú. However, informants had no idea 775 where the souls of the white people and Indians of other tribes went after death, beyond referring to the missionary's heaven. Upon being asked the destination of the souls of white people, one Mundurucú chuckled and replied, "You, and not I, should know the answer to that question."